

REMARKS

In response to the Office action (Restriction Requirement) Applicants elect, without traverse, Group 1, claims 1-45, drawn to a singulating device. Accordingly, claims 46-73 have been cancelled.

Applicants further elect, in response to paragraph 6 of the Office action, Species I, represented by Figures 1-11 and 14A. It is respectfully submitted that the claims which read on Species I are claims 1-7, 9-22, and 24-45. Accordingly, claims 8 and 23 have been withdrawn although Applicants traverse the requirement that an election of species be made.

Applicants submit that independent claims 1 and 17 are generic with respect to the requirement to elect between Species I, II, III and IV inasmuch as claims 1 and 17 do not recite a separation device. Further, it is respectfully submitted that the claims 6 (which depends from claim 1) and 21 (which depends from claim 17) are generic inasmuch as they simply recite a "separation device" without specifying the type of separation device. Because of the presence of such generic claims, it is respectfully submitted that the species claims 7 and 22 which are directed to a guide, and dependent claims 8 and 23 which are directed to a slide, represent a reasonable number of species claims and therefore those claims should be allowed to proceed in the instant application. Applicants note that currently there is no dependent claim directed to Species II, Fig. 14B, which illustrates as the separation device a funnel. Should the examiner agree that claims 1, 6, 17 and 21 are generic claims and that Applicants are entitled to a reasonable number of species claims, Applicants intend to add dependent claims directed to the embodiment of Fig. 14B which illustrates a funnel as the separation device.

Finally, Applicants note that Species III, Figs. 1-11 and 14C, and Species IV, Fig. 15, are believed to represent the same species. Fig. 14C illustrates a slide as the separation device whereas Fig. 15 also illustrates a slide, of somewhat different configuration, as the separation device. As both of these species reference figures illustrating slides as separation devices, it is respectfully submitted that withdrawn claims 8 and 23 read on both Species III and Species IV.

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Applicants have made a diligent effort to respond to the Office action. An early Office action on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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